

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 8, 2004

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 511, I was in my congressional district on official business. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

IN RECOGNITION OF MONCRE
TELEPHONE COOPERATIVE**HON. MIKE ROGERS**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 8, 2004

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the 50th anniversary of the MonCre Telephone Cooperative in Ramer, Al.

MonCre began operations in 1954 to bring phone service to the unserved rural areas of Montgomery, Crenshaw and eventually Bulloch and Pike counties, and was the vision of the late founder and Montgomery Advertiser columnist Mildred Smith of Ramer.

Today, MonCre employs 24 highly trained technicians and staff, and serves approximately 3,500 households. Services offered 50 years later are far different from those of 1954 and now include a wide range of telephone, internet and DSL services.

It's not often we have the opportunity to recognize the achievements and contributions of a community institution like MonCre, and I appreciate the House's attention to the matter at this important occasion.

RECOGNIZING OCTOBER AS NA-
TIONAL SPINA BIFIDA AWARE-
NESS MONTH**HON. HAROLD E. FORD, JR.**

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 8, 2004

Mr. FORD. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the more than 70,000 Americans and their many family members who are currently affected by Spina Bifida. October is National Spina Bifida Awareness Month and I hope our colleagues will join this effort to raise awareness about this disease and recognize those Americans, including many of my constituents.

Spina Bifida is the Nation's most common, permanently disabling birth defect occurring when a neural tube defect prevents the central nervous system from closing properly during the early stages of pregnancy. Each year more than 4,000 pregnancies are affected, and of these, 1,500 babies are born with the disease.

I was honored to be a part of the 16th Annual Roast for Spina Bifida on September 26th. During that dinner, Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM, Redskins owner Dan Snyder, and I roasted former CNN Anchor Bernard Shaw. I am pleased to report that even under fire, a now retired Shaw was as cool, calm, and collected as he had been during his time on CNN. He was truly a fantastic sport.

The Spina Bifida Association of America (SBAA), an organization that has helped people with Spina Bifida and their families for over 30 years, work tirelessly to prevent and reduce suffering from this devastating birth defect. There are approximately 60 chapters serving over 125 communities nationwide and I would like to acknowledge and thank SBAA and the Spina Bifida Association of Tennessee for all that they have done for the families in my state affected by this birth defect. I would especially like to thank Scott Price of Nashville, a Spina Bifida Association Foundation Board member for his great work.

In closing, I would like to thank the Spina Bifida Association of America for allowing me to be a part of their roast and wish them the best of luck in their endeavors throughout the year. I urge my colleagues here in the House to support the important efforts of the SBAA and to remember those affected by Spina Bifida, particularly during this month.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO DORA
VALDEZ**HON. SCOTT McINNIS**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 8, 2004

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Dora Valdez, a dedicated employee of Delta County, CO who was recently honored for 25 years of impeccable service with the County. Dora is a responsible employee who engenders the trust of everyone she encounters, and it is an honor to recognize her many years of service to her community before this body of Congress and this Nation.

Dora was born and raised in Delta and has been an active member of her community her entire life. She has worked with four county clerks and managed all areas within that domain including motor vehicles, recording, election, cashier, and birth and marriage license departments. Dora is bilingual and aides many members of the Spanish community by translating for other offices. Dora enjoys her work, and has helped to many citizens in times of need.

Mr. Speaker, Dora Valdez has spent 25 years serving her local government in Delta County. Her dedication to her community is highly commendable and I am honored to recognize her many years of service before this body of Congress and this Nation. Thank you for all your hard work, Dora, and I wish you, and your family all the best in your future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING AND SUPPORTING
EFFORTS TO PROMOTE GREATER
CIVIC AWARENESS AMONG PEOP-
LE OF THE UNITED STATES

SPEECH OF

HON. RALPH M. HALL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 6, 2004

Mr. HALL. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the majority leader, Mr. DELAY, and Chairman BOB NEY for bringing this timely resolution, H. Res.

796, to the floor today. I also want to thank the cosponsors for their interest in this bipartisan bill.

H. Res. 796 recognizes and supports efforts to promote greater civic awareness among the people of the United States. The resolution recognizes those organizations and groups that actively promote voter registration and participation, as well as those communities and schools that have instituted civic awareness programs.

The resolution also encourages local communities and elected officials at all levels of government to promote greater civic awareness among the electorate and greater participation in the upcoming elections.

The Constitution of the United States establishes a representative form of government, and throughout our Nation's history, many groups of people have fought, protested, rallied, and died for the right to vote. The 15th, 19th, 24th, and 26th amendments to the Constitution represent some of those hard-won voting privileges.

The percentage of Americans registered to vote unfortunately has declined in the last 10 years. There is no better time to make citizens more aware of the importance of exercising their right—and their responsibility—to vote. Voting is fundamental to our representative form of government—and as Members of Congress we must support and promote civic awareness and participation.

Our democracy is a government of all the people, by all the people, and for all the people. All those eligible to vote have an equal voice in determining the future of our great Nation. H. Res. 796 promotes greater awareness of one of the greatest privileges we have as American citizens—the right to vote—and I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join in supporting this timely measure.

HONORING J.D. ROGERS

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 8, 2004

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you today to pay tribute to Mr. J.D. Rogers, III, who on September 18, 2004 was honored during the UAW Local 599 Walter Reuther award ceremony in Flint, Michigan for his contributions as the longest-serving production committeeman in the history of the Local.

J.D. Rogers began his leadership career within UAW Local 599 in 1976 when he was elected as Alternative Committeeman. One month after assuming his post he was elected to fulfill the position of the recently resigned Committeeman. His superior leadership skills and support of the union membership granted him several unopposed elections to this post.

J.D. is committed to fulfilling Walter Reuther's mission of helping people, and ensuring human dignity and social justice for all. His hard work and dedication to the duties of his elected position is commendable. His deeds are self evident in the faith the members of 599 have bestowed upon him in allowing him to be re-elected. His service to the UAW extends many years and is highly regarded.

Mr. Speaker, many people have greatly benefited from the leadership and service of